

# 2016 Massachusetts Community Transportation Coordination Conference

## Marketing Community Transportation Services

### Presenters

- Liz Taylor, National Rural Transit Assistance Program (National RTAP)

### Facilitator

- Rachel Fichtenbaum, MassMobility

### Introduction – Rachel

- This session was requested by attendees at last year's conference. National RTAP focuses on transit authorities, but these strategies can also be used by human service agencies and nonprofits that are publicizing their own transportation services or helping their local transit authority market fixed-route and demand-response options

### Presentation – Liz

- Liz presented on National RTAP's marketing toolkit: <http://nationalrtap.org/marketingtoolkit/>

### Q&A

- How to manage expectations?
  - It's important to have a good understanding of what the existing transit service does and doesn't do. Your marketing should fit what is being offered, and not raise unreasonable expectations. Marketing can attract new riders, but it won't improve service.
- How to market the less tangible benefits of transit?
  - Testimonials are always a powerful tool in communicating the benefits of transit.
  - Marketing can help meet riders where they are, with targeted messaging: bring the message to schools (teachers, students, parents), to senior centers, to employment centers.
- How to market to college students?
  - When trying to attract a new population, it is important to understand any preconceptions people may have about transit. Marketing should address those perceptions and present facts to counter any negative perceptions.
  - Use testimonials and targeted messages
  - Where do students want to go? Can they get there using your service?
- The bus as advertising:
  - The vehicle itself is a powerful marketing tool. It can be used as a source of revenue through third party advertising, or as the agency's own rolling billboard. It will always be important to balance these two purposes.
  - New transit information (schedule/route changes) can be effectively transmitted to existing riders with displays inside the vehicle
  - Services can be advertised on the outside of the vehicle to attract new riders.